Aging and Disability Services
February 26, 2001

TIIAP Status Report
Evaluation of ADS Homecare Technology Systems

This report covers information about the implementation of the Homecare Referral and Homecare Aide Time Tracking systems. The information presented was collected between August, 2000 and the present.

The two data system components have been implemented as follows:

- The Homecare Referral system with homecare agencies was implemented in October, 1999. Training of case managers on the new system began in December 1999 when four case managers were trained and began using the new system. By July 2000, approximately 70% of all ADS case managers were trained. All case managers are now trained on the system, but not all of them are using the system on a regular basis.

- The Homecare Aide Time Tracking system is now projected to be implemented in March beginning with internal testing of the system.

The information presented below is organized by the categories of data in the Analysis Plan.

Attachment A. *Data Collection/Report Preparation Timeline,* was revised to meet the changing needs of the project. The following revisions were made:

- The client survey will be completed in March, 2001 and will not be completed again. The value of the survey relative to the imposition on frail elderly and disabled clients does not merit repeating the survey before the end of the project. The March survey should be sufficient to understand any issues related to client satisfaction.

- Case managers will be surveyed in March, 2001 and again in September, 2001.

- The overall system measures were revised last year. Data on market share is still easily available but authorized versus provided hours and the discrepancy report are no longer available. However, the number of accepted, declined, and cancelled referrals is tracked by agency and provides a good picture of which agencies are able to fill referral orders.

1. The third ADS focus group to discuss implementation, problems encountered, and improvements in the capacity of ADS to monitor agency performance was held in

February of 2001 (Attachment B). Staff believe the overall implementation of the new systems has gone well in spite of problems with start-up (especially with the time tracking system). The referral system seems to be working smoothly with only minor implementation problems still needing action. Key issues or recommendations reported by staff include:

- There have been significant problems with computer system firewalls at Evergreen Care Network and Home Care Services which took months to overcome. These issues, as well as issues related to lack of IT staff availability, have significantly delayed the implementation of the time tracking system. However, staff have overcome these problems and expect to have the new time tracking system tested in March.

- Some case managers do not use the new referral system. ADS management is aware of the issue and will take steps to solve this problem soon.

- Some homecare agency supervisors aren't yet using the referral system and ask case managers to send a fax referral. New supervisors are not always trained on how to use the system and this causes problems with referrals.

- The lack of consistent participation by home care staff at the home care agency meetings has created problems with implementation. Staff anticipate some issues with implementing the time tracking system because of this problem.

- The home care referral system has made it easier to get information about agencies who are doing a good job filling orders and the project coordinator summarizes this information on a regular basis. Some staff would like better access to the computerized reports. The Project Manager will establish an easy access button on each persons computer so they can access reports directly. The division director uses these reports on a regular basis to make informed decisions and to communicate more effectively with home care agency directors.

- Presently, the billing database only tracks hours served by agency but doesn't compare hours to those authorized. When the time tracking system is implemented, this information will be available.

- The final focus group will be held in the fall of 2001.

Two Finance staff from ADS were also surveyed (Attachment C). The finance staff spend an estimated total of 54 hours each month on homecare agency forms and reports. They find it somewhat easy to process these reports and one of the finance staff person's often creates computerized reports related to homecare agency data.

2. Two surveys were done to assess the present system for tracking the time homecare aides spend with clients. The first was a telephone survey of home care

aides from two home care agencies (Attachment D). The second was a telephone survey of home care agency supervisors (Attachment E).

a) Home Care Aide Survey Results:

➢ 35 home care aides were surveyed and 89% of them have worked for their agencies for more than six months.
➢ 64% of the aides surveyed felt the time tracking system they currently use is very easy to use, while 36% felt it was somewhat or very hard to use.
➢ 63% of aides from one agency like the present reporting system a lot while only 31% from the other agency liked their system a lot. Only 7% of all the aides indicated they didn't like the system at all.
➢ 69% of aides felt the current system was very easy to learn and 24% felt it was somewhat easy.
➢ 67% of aides felt there was some paperwork while only 7% felt there was a lot of paperwork to track their hours.
➢ Only 2 aides reported that a client had ever refused to sign their timesheet.

. b) Home Care Agency Supervisor Survey Results:

➢ Thirty-seven supervisors from 13 agencies were surveyed by telephone— 81% of them have worked for their agency for over six months.
➢ Most supervisors (86%) felt the present tracking system was somewhat or very easy to use and 78% thought their systems were either okay to use or they liked it a lot. 22% didn't like it very much or at all.
➢ The present systems were very or somewhat easy to learn for 92% of the supervisors.
➢ 78% feel they spend a moderate to a great deal of time on the system.
➢ Interestingly, 29% felt paychecks were often or sometimes late as a result of their time tracking system. This response level was less than the survey done in 2000.
➢ 30% of supervisors said they often deal with issues related to whether or not workers arrive and leave clients' homes on time. Another 46% said they sometimes deal with these issues. Issues related to workers' arrival and departure time are higher than in the previous survey.
➢ Half of the supervisors felt the time tracking system makes their job easier.
➢ 59% felt the tracking system provided a good deal of accountability, while 22% felt it provides complete accountability.
➢ 62% felt the time tracking system often helps them learn about staffing problems.
➢ While 49% of workers never create customized computer reports related to worker time, 32% often create such reports and another 19% sometimes do.
➢ In addition to the responses to these questions, some home care supervisors volunteered other concerns they have with a change to a new system. Some are already on a computerized call-in system and believe that paperwork generated by accounting staff has increased since using this system. Others

are concerned that the amount of time implementing the new system will not cover the agencies costs of implementation. There was a great deal of variability of supervisor responses both within agencies and across agencies. Some supervisors are looking forward to having a new system and believe it will hold their workers accountable, others are concerned that the new system will create new problems. Testing and training on the new system will be critical for its success.

3. The home care agency finance staff were surveyed (Attachment F) in February as well and the results are as follows:

- Twelve agencies and 13 homecare agency finance staff were surveyed. Two finance staff responded from one agency.
- All of the finance staff have worked for their agency more than six months.
- Five agencies have under 65 homecare aides on their payroll; four have 100-150 aides; and three have between 250-749 aides.
- Time spent on payroll ranges depending on size. 82% spend less than 30% of a staff persons time on payroll. The rest of the agencies have one full time staff person dedicated to payroll.
- 46% of the finance staff felt reports to ADS were somewhat or very hard to complete. Another 46% felt the reports were very easy or somewhat easy. One person felt the reports were difficult because of their own system.
- Most finance staff (54%) felt they spend a moderate amount of time completing these reports. One person reported that the reports take a great deal of time relative to the size of the billing.
- Several of the staff (77%) create customized computer reports related to worker hours.

4. A comparison of market share data from April 1999, March 2000 and November 2000 (see Attachment G) shows a continuing shift of market share from the two agencies with the highest market share to agencies who originally had a much smaller share of the market. The largest provider lost 30% of its share during this time and the second largest lost 14% of its share. Five agencies increased their market share during this period. One agency increased its share of the market fourfold and it now has the 4th highest number of clients (compared to 7th in 1999) and 3rd highest number of hours served (compared to 5th in 1999). Two agencies increased their market share by 49% and 34% during the one and a half year timeframe. Two agencies no longer contract for home care services and one agency was added to the mix of home care agencies. These comparisons hold true with slight variations for the percentage of clients served and the percentage of hours delivered by agency. It is possible that some of the shifts in clients served by agency may be the result of the change in the case manager referral system. The case manager survey completed in March might explain some of the reasons why shifts have taken place.

ADS Technology Project – 2000 and 2001

Data Collection/Report Preparation Timeline

Component	Data Collection/ Report Preparation	Data Collection/ Report Preparation	Data Collection/ Report Preparation	Data Collection/ Report Preparation	Data Collection/ Report Preparation
A. Client survey	Mar '00		Mar '01		
B. Home care agency ⊕ aides ⊕ supervisors ⊕ financial staff		Aug '00 Jan '00 Jan '00	Jan '01 Jan '01 Jan '01	Aug '01 July '01 July '01	
C. Case manager survey	Mar '00		Mar '01	Sept '01	
D. ADS: ⊕ financial staff survey ⊕ focus group questions	Mar '00		Mar '01 Mar '01	Sept '01	
E. Overall system measures: ⊕ authorized versus provided hours ⊕ market share report	Mar '00	Sept '00	Mar '01	Sept '01	
F. Reports to NTIA	Jan '00	July '00	Jan '01	July '01	Oct '01

ADS FOCUS GROUP HELD 2/12/01

What is the status (dates of key action steps, etc. of implementation of the two databases? The homecare referral system has been in place for over a year (full implementation completed by 1999). It is used by a significant number of case managers. Some case managers are still reluctant to use the system and some home care agency supervisors are not trained to use the system. The time tracking system design and analysis is done and programming will begin soon. The plan is for testing of the new system to take place in March with full implementation to follow.

What implementation problems have been encountered? There have been significant problems with computer system firewalls at Evergreen Care Network and Home Care Services. It took months to overcome the firewall issues but they have now been resolved. Another issue has been that some case managers do not use the referral system but continue making referrals under the old system. ADS management is aware of the problem and is considering steps to solve it in the next couple of months. There are also some home health care supervisors who have not learned or refuse to use the e-mail system to retrieve referrals and instead ask case managers to send a faxed copy of the referral. Additionally, home care agencies do not always train new staff on the system and it takes a considerable amount of time for them to begin using it.

One of the most significant barriers to implementation of the time tracking system has been access to IT staff. ADS staff go through Executive Services to purchase computer programming services and this has taken a considerable amount of time to coordinate. The lack of IT staff availability has been an issue from the inception of the project. Additionally, because staff have a number of projects they are responsible for, it has been difficult to synchronize staff schedules.

Another issue has been working with the home care agencies to implement the system. Meetings with the agencies take place on a regular basis, however different people from the agencies show up at the meetings. The lack of consistent participation creates problems with implementation. Agencies do not always follow-through with agreed upon plans and some agencies rarely participate in the meetings.

How were these overcome? Problems have been resolved by technical people working diligently to resolve the issues. The firewall issues were technically very difficult but were resolved through persistent efforts. ADS staff continue to work with home care agency staff to get home care supervisors

trained on the system and to get full cooperation of case managers in making referrals through the new system.

What, in retrospect, would you have done differently? Staff feel like the project could have used another full time position for training and providing support to agencies and case managers. Some implementation problems would have been avoided with extra staff. Implementation of the project was more time consuming than originally envisioned because of the complexity of the system and the number of people involved. The accuracy of the time line could have been improved. The problems with hiring technical staff probably could not have been anticipated but have caused significant problems in implementation.

How easy is it for you to access data on homecare agency/worker performance? The only data the contract specialist receives on a routine basis is the billing data. He does not receive information on worker performance. The home care referral system has made it easier to get information about agencies who are doing a good job of filling orders for referrals and the project coordinator summarizes this information on a regular basis. It is now possible to see trends of agency performance in placing workers in homes and performance can be compared across agencies. The present system tracks which client referrals have been denied and why they were denied. ADS staff now want to have a report generated that will show the reasons for declines. The division director has access to home care system reports from her computer.

What data or databases do you access to monitor homecare agency performance? The homecare referral reports are used to see how various agencies are performing. The market trend analysis reports have been used to see how different agencies have been able to serve clients over time. There has been a continuing trend that shows a shift toward more referrals going to smaller agencies than under the old system.

The referral report and trend reports are presently on the director's computer but not everyone has easy access to these reports. It was recommended that the project manager make sure that the information is available on everyone's computer. She plans to put an easy access button on each staff's computer so they can look at the reports on a regular basis.

The home care billing database only shows hours served by agency but does not compare hours to those authorized. When the time tracking system is implemented, the reporting system will show authorized versus served hours.

How often do you use such data? The division director uses the information from these reports a couple of times a month. She uses the data at the Area Agency Directors Association meetings and when talking with home care agency directors. She needs this information about trends in home care because the home care program is one of the most important programs in the aging and

disability system. The director has been able to make better policy decisions because of access to performance information.

Because data is available on referrals, agencies can no longer point fingers at case managers for lack of referrals. It is easy to see which agencies are able to fill orders and which are not. This information has been helpful to all involved ADS staff and several of them regularly access this information.

How accurate are the data you have/use? Data is accurate when reported but it is still not completely in place. When all parts of the new system are implemented, staff expect accurate and complete report capability. Management staff will need to be involved to make sure all the final pieces of the project take place and that all staff are fully on board with the new systems.

Are the data adequate for monitoring homecare agency performance? The information is not completely adequate because there is not enough specific information to measure performance. At this point, hearing no complaints is the best sign that the agencies are doing a good job. It will be helpful when there is the capability to report the authorized versus scheduled hours. Another desired enhancement would be to develop a mechanism for case managers to report issues related to agency performance to the contract staff. Because the billing and reporting process is being streamlined, the contract staff will have more time to measure performance and support the efforts of home care agencies. A recommendation was made to simplify the language and better disseminate the home care standards to all involved staff. It would be helpful to get information to people through more than one communication vehicle.

Are reports you receive from the homecare agencies (including billing forms) verified using databases? If so, which databases? Databases are used but the reporting system needs to be better integrated. When the time tracking system is in place, home care agency aides will have immediate feedback through the telephone system on the number of hours authorized and the number already used by the client. Hopefully, this will help workers better manage the time spent with clients.

In addition to the established focus group questions, staff were asked how project activities will be sustained after the federal grant ends. The project lead will continue to monitor the implementation of the system and staff members are already looking for new resources to build on the systems established through the grant.

Those attending the meeting included: Andrea Yip, Pamela Piering, Rosemary Cunningham, Dick Tarr, Karen Messo, Georgina Arnold, and Millie Wong

ADS TECHNOLOGY GRANT SURVEY
Jody Sales and Karen Messo

For each question below, please circle the letter that corresponds to your answer.

1. How much time do you spend in a typical month working with forms/reports you receive from homecare agencies? Please estimate the number of hours. **50 hrs. & 4hrs.**

2. How easy is it to process reports you receive from the homecare agencies?
   a.   Very easy
   b.   **Somewhat easy (2)**
   c.   Somewhat hard
   d.   Very hard

3. Does the time tracking system make your job easier?
   a.   Often
   b.   Sometimes
   c.   Seldom
   d.   **N/A**

4. Do you ever create customized computer reports related to homecare agency data?
   a.   **Often (1)**
   b.   Sometimes
   c.   Seldom
   d.   **Never (1)**

5. Do you verify agency billing forms using the time tracking database?
   a.   Always
   b.   Often
   c.   Sometimes
   d.   Seldom
   e.   **N/A (2)**

Fremont

Home Care Aides' Response (19 respondents)

Have you worked here more than six months?

Yes	94.7%
No	5.3%

How easy is it to use the current system for reporting
the time you spend with your clients?

Very easy	68.4%
Somewhat easy	31.6%
Somewhat hard	0.0%
Very hard	0.0%

Do you like this way of reporting your time?

I like it a lot	63.2%
It's okay	26.3%
I don't like it very much	10.5%
I don't like it all	0.0%

How easy was it for you to learn the current system
for reporting your
time?

Very easy	73.7%
Somewhat easy	21.1%
Somewhat hard	5.3%
Very hard	0.0%

How much paperwork do you do in order
to track your hours?

No paperwork	5.3%
Some paperwork	78.9%
A lot of paperwork	15.8%

Has a client refused to sign your timesheets?

Frequently	0.0%
Occasionally	0.0%
Never	100.0%

Armstrong

Home Care Aides' Response (26 respondents)

Have you worked here more than six months?

Yes	84.6%
No	15.4%

How easy is it to use the current system for reporting the time you spend with your clients?

Very easy	61.5%
Somewhat easy	23.1%
Somewhat hard	15.4%
Very hard	0.0%

Do you like this way of reporting your time?

I like it a lot	30.8%
It's okay	65.4%
I don't like it very much	3.8%
I don't like it all	0.0%

How easy was it for you to learn the current system for reporting your time?

Very easy	65.4%
Somewhat easy	26.9%
Somewhat hard	7.7%
Very hard	0.0%

How much paperwork do you do in order to track your hours?

No paperwork	42.3%
Some paperwork	57.7%
A lot of paperwork	0.0%

Has a client refused to sign your timesheets?

Frequently	0.0%
Occasionally	7.7%
Never	92.3%

1. Have you worked here more than six months?
    a. Yes **30 (81%)**
    b. No **7 (19%)**

2. How easy is it to use the current system for reporting time spent by homecare aides with clients?
    a. Very easy to use **17 (46%)**
    b. Somewhat easy to use **15 (40%)**
    c. Somewhat hard to use **4 (11%)**
    d. Very hard to use **1 (3%)**

3. Do you like this way for workers to report their time?
    a. I like it a lot **12 (32%)**
    b. It's o.k. **17 (46%)**
    c. I don't like it very much **5 (14%)**
    d. I don't like it at all **3 (8%)**

4. How easy was it for you to learn the current system for tracking and reporting worker time?
    a. Very easy to learn **19 (51%)**
    b. Somewhat easy to learn **15 (41%)**
    c. Somewhat hard to learn **3 (8%)**
    d. Very hard to learn

5. How much time do you spend doing paperwork for the time tracking system?
    a. No time **2 (5%)**
    b. Very little time **6 (16%)**
    c. A moderate amount of time **19 (51%)**
    d. A great deal of time **10 (27%)**

6. Do problems with the time tracking system make homecare aide paychecks late?
    a. Often **2 (5%)**
    b. Sometimes **9 (24%)**
    c. Seldom **10 (27%)**
    d. Never **16 (43%)**

7. How often do you deal with issues related to whether or not workers arrive and leave clients' homes on time?
    a. Often **11 (30%)**
    b. Sometimes **17 (46%)**
    c. Seldom **6 (16%)**
    d. Never **3 (8%)**

8. Does the time tracking system make your job easier? **36 responses**
    a. Often **18 (50%)**
    b. Sometimes **12 (33%)**
    c. Seldom **6 (17%)**
    d. Never **0**

9. Does the time tracking system provide accountability of workers for the hours they spend with clients?
    a. No **1 (3%)**
    b. It provides some accountability **6 (16%)**
    c. It provides a good deal of accountability **22 (59%)**
    d. It provides complete accountability **8 (22%)**

10. Does the time tracking system help you learn about staffing problems (e.g., no-shows, workers coming late, etc.)?
    a. Often **23 (62%)**
    b. Sometimes **10 (27%)**
    c. Seldom **3 (8%)**
    d. Never **1 (3%)**

11. Do you ever create customized computer reports related to worker hours?
    a. Often **12 (32%)**
    b. Sometimes **7 (19%)**
    c. Seldom **0**
    d. Never **18 (49%)**

Twelve Agencies Responded with one agency having two people respond.

1. Have you worked here more than six months?

    a.   Yes   **13 (100%)**

    b.   No   **0**

Please answer the next three questions only if you are the manager in charge of all finance/billing staff: 12 Responses

2. How many home care aides are on the payroll? **65 & under = 5 (42%); 100-150= 4 (33%); 250 – 749= 3 (25%)**

3. How much time does agency staff spend in a typical month on payroll? Please estimate the number of hours. **.30 FTE or less = 9 (82%); .30 FTE – 1 FTE = 2 (18%); dont know = 1**

4. Please translate this into the number of full-time equivalent staff required to prepare payroll: **See # 3**

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5. How easy is it to compile data for reports to Aging and Disability Services?

    a.   Very easy **1 (8%)**

    b.   Somewhat easy **5 (38%)**

    c.   Somewhat hard **5 (38%)**

    d.   Very hard   **1 (8%)**

    e.   Don't know **1 (8%)**

6. How much time do you spend in a typical month preparing these reports to ADS?

    a.   No time **0**

    b.   Very little time **3 (23%)**

    c.   A moderate amount of time **7 (54%)**

    d.   A great deal of time **1 (8%)**

    e.   Doesn't apply; I do not prepare these reports **2 (15%)**

7. Do you ever create customized computer reports related to worker hours?

    a.   Often **3 (23%)**

    b.   Sometimes **7 (54%)**

    c.   Seldom   **1 (8%)**

    d.   Never   **2 (15%)**

    e.   Not applicable **0**

	March 2000				November 2000			ATTACHMENT G
	# of Clients	% of Clients	# of Units	% of Units	# of Clients	% of Clients	# of Units	% of Units
Catholic Community Services	683	33%	29153	28%	587	28%	25597	23%
Sea-Mar	332	16%	15890	15%	307	14%	15100	13%
Armstrong Uniserve	326	16%	16718	16%	356	17%	19693	17%
Fremont Public Association	213	10%	9564	9%	230	11%	10729	9%
Amicable Healthcare, Inc.	134	6%	9021	9%	137	6%	10179	9%
St. Jude Healthcare	79	4%	4669	5%	70	3%	4318	4%
Chesterfield Health Services	164	8%	9403	9%	240	11%	15922	14%
Kin On Homecare	54	3%	3294	3%	61	3%	3509	3%
Professional Choice	24	1%	2414	2%	25	1%	1866	2%
Visiting Nurse Services	8	0%	385	0%	9	0%	360	0%
On Your Own	1	0%	111	0%	3	0%	158	0%
Amstars Health, Inc.	35	2%	1496	1%	53	2%	2850	3%
Soundcare Home Care Services	20	1%	1307	1%	50	2%	3311	3%
Millennia Healthcare	0	0%	0	0%	23	1%	1104	1%
Total	**2073**		**103,425**		**2128**		**113592**	

Home Care Agency Market Share

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